

Spring 1-15-2013

ENG 5020-001: Graduate Workshop in Fiction

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ENG 5020: Graduate Workshop in Fiction
Spring 2013, Th 7-9:30pm, Coleman Hall 3159

Professor Lania Knight, PhD
Coleman Hall 3751

Office Hours: T 11-2pm and Th 11-1pm, Email: ldknight@einu.edu

In her book *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Jane Smiley writes, "If to live is to progress, if you are lucky, from foolishness to wisdom, then to write novels is to broadcast various stages of your foolishness." In this workshop, students will read portions of Smiley's book along with four novels, and they will write the first 40-60 pages of their own novel. Students will participate in Q&A (online) sessions with contemporary novelists, attend the Lions in Winter Festival, and generally read, write, and read some more. Students are encouraged to dive in and take risks in writing and broadcasting their own particular stage of foolishness.

Required Texts:

Crone, Moira. *The Not Yet*. New Orleans: UNO Press. 2012.
Jarrar, Randa. *A Map of Home*. New York: Other Press. 2008.
Kardos, Michael. *The Three-Day Affair*. New York: Grove Atlantic. 2012.
Smiley, Jane. *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*. New York: Anchor. 2005.
Urrea, Luis Alberto. *The Hummingbird's Daughter*. New York: Back Bay. 2005.

Grades:

Weekly Responses	200
LIW Response	100
Workshop Submission I	100
Workshop Submission II	100
Workshop Responses	200
Novel Presentation	100
Final Reflection	200
Total	1000 points

Be Prepared for Class

To prepare for each class, please do the following:

1. Be ready to participate in (possibly foolish) activities
2. Bring your textbooks and a notebook with you to class
3. Read the assigned material **before** class
4. Respond via Dropbox on Desire2Learn to the assigned reading **before** class

Reading Responses

You'll write responses to the readings from Jane Smiley's *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel* for each class, which may or may not be shared during class (depends on time available in class). These responses are due before class via Dropbox on Desire2Learn by 5pm. Each response is worth around 20 points. Your response can be anything you dream up that conveys to me that 1) you read the assigned material, 2) you understand the material, and 3) you have made connections between the material and class and/or your writing process.

Some suggested formats for your response to the reading: 1) a List of Ten, which means ten of anything about the reading, such as words you needed to look up, items you found interesting or confusing, phrases you had questions about... plus your comments. ANYTHING GOES. Write page and paragraph numbers, 2) a video (YouTube) in which you discuss the reading and your thoughts on it, 3) good, old-fashioned notes (at least 500 words), 4) a short play or story or poem, or 5) a song (YouTube). Feel free to collaborate with another student if you go the video/song route.

Attendance

I keep attendance. You may miss up to two classes. If you miss a third class, you will fail the course. Exceptions will be made only for documented emergencies and documented school activities. In order to receive credit for material due on a day you are absent, submit it to me via Dropbox on Desire2Learn by 5pm the day it is due.

Lions in Winter Literary Festival at Doudna Fine Arts Center

You must attend the Lions in Winter (LIW) Literary Festival at the Doudna Fine Arts Center January 25–26. Because we are reading Randa Jarrar's novel, it is crucial that you attend at least one of her events: a workshop on Saturday 11:30am–12:45pm and a reading Saturday 7–9pm. Write a response of 1500–2000 words. Describe the event (briefly) and reflect on what you have learned about writing by attending LIW.

Workshop Submissions

For the first workshop, submit the opening chapter(s) of a novel, and for the second workshop, submit subsequent chapter(s). Each submission should be 20–30 pages (5,000–7,500 words) in length. Please do not go below or beyond the word count. You are free to write about any topic, but the material must be new for this class. Submissions will be graded for originality and risk. Does your novel say something interesting? Is the writing elegant? Does it pull the reader in? Workshop sign up will take place early in the semester. Your chapters will be due the week before your workshop and will be sent to classmates and the instructor via email.

Workshop Responses

For each workshop submission, type a one-page single-spaced letter (450–500 words) to the writer. Email this response to the writer and to the instructor by 5pm the day of workshop. Your letter should address what you see happening on the page (describe the content and form), as well as questions for the author. No need to say you like the material or that it is good or bad—those comments are not helpful for workshop, though it is understandable that they are often the starting point. More important is to reflect back to the writer what you see happening on the page and to pose questions and predictions so the writer can begin to see if you, the reader, have understood what they have attempted.

Novel Presentation: *The Hummingbird's Daughter*

Read *The Hummingbird's Daughter* and then analyze the novel using your favorite tools from *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*. Present your findings to the class in an 8–10-minute presentation and include any visual or hands-on materials as appropriate to demonstrate your understanding of the novel and your ability to apply Smiley's methods of analysis to it. You are welcome to collaborate with a fellow classmate. Presentation ideas **must be approved by the instructor by week twelve (3/28)**.

Final Reflection:

Write a 12–14-page (3,000–3,500) reflection on the course readings, the activities in class, the chapters you wrote, and any other material relevant to your development as a writer. This essay should connect the course materials and activities with your understanding of writing, and it should also demonstrate your lively engagement with the class and the process of writing over the span of the semester.

Students with Documented Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodation, you must make arrangements through the Office of Disability Services; you should contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Tentative Schedule

Week One

Thursday, 1/10: Intro and overview; workshop sign up

Week Two

Thursday, 1/17: Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 1, “Introduction” and Ch. 2, “What is a Novel?” (3–28) and *A Map of Home*, Part I (1–143)

Week Three

Thursday, 1/24: Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 3, “Who is a Novelist?” (29–55) and *A Map of Home*, Part II (145–290)

Friday, 1/25–Saturday, 1/26: Lions in Winter Literary Festival

Week Four

Thursday, 1/31: **DUE:** response to LIW; Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 4, “The Origin of the Novel,” (56–82) and *The Three-Day Affair* Part I (1–129)

Week Five

Thursday, 2/7: Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 5, “The Psychology of the Novel,” (83–104) and *The Three-Day Affair* Part II (133–248)

Week Six

Thursday, 2/14: Workshop (4); Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 6, “Morality and the Novel,” (105–27)

Week Seven

Thursday, 2/21: Workshop (3); Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 7, “The Art of the Novel,” (128–56)

Week Eight

Thursday, 2/28: Workshop (3); Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 8, “The Novel and History,” (157–177)

Week Nine

Thursday, 3/7: Workshop (3)

Week Ten: SPRING BREAK

Week Eleven

Thursday, 3/21: Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 9, "The Circle of the Novel," (178–203) and *The Not Yet* (1–103)

Week Twelve

Thursday, 3/28: Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 10, "A Novel of Your Own (I)," (204–28) and *The Not Yet* (107–204); presentation approvals final

Week Thirteen

Thursday, 4/4: Workshop (4); Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 11, "A Novel of Your Own," (229–49)

Week Fourteen

Thursday, 4/11: Workshop (4); Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 12, "Good Faith: A Case History," (250–69)

Week Fifteen

Thursday, 4/18: Workshop (5)

Week Sixteen

Thursday, 4/25: Discuss *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*, Ch. 13, "Reading a Hundred Novels," (270–80); *The Hummingbird's Daughter* presentations; evaluations

Friday, 4/26: **DUE:** Final Reflection